

THE SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

This society held a very successful meeting at Weston-super-Mare, the High Sheriff of the county in the chair.

Mr. Giles, one of the hon. secretaries, read a report from the committee, which showed that the number of members enrolled is 339. It appears that the society have published a volume of transactions, containing the papers read during the last two years. Mr. Freeman read a paper "On the Perpendicular Churches of Somerset."

A paper on the Abbey Church of Bath, by Mr. C. E. Davis, was afterwards read. Mr. Davis remarked that many accounts had been written of the abbey, all of them speaking in the highest terms of the beauty of its design, but agreeing also in the faultiness of the details and the clumsiness of the work. He looked on the building, however, in a different light. He did not consider it as an example of the perpendicular, but as the herald of a new style. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, about which time the abbey was designed, the literature and art of other nations were very generally studied in England, and the traveller came home with a growing admiration of the monuments of Rome. In the design of the Bath Abbey it was evident that the architect was alive to the follies of the day, and endeavoured to avoid them. His aim was to avoid the perpendicular lines and the angles then so much prized; and the appearance of poverty in the building was the result, not of that design, but of the smallness of his funds. The arches of the nave and choir were elegant without extreme lightness; and beauty, not monotony, was the result. The roof appeared to derive support from invisible means, and was a model of grace, elegance, and lightness. (?) The merit of the design of the church could not be doubted: the cleverness of its construction had always been allowed; and he was at a loss to see why rudeness of workmanship should be imputed to it. It was the commencement of a new style, and, having the building before them, all united in praising its general effect.

The Rev. M. Clerk questioned some statements made by Professor Willis in his lecture on Wells Cathedral, at the recent meeting of the Archaeological Institute. Mr. Willis had distinctly said that the west front could not have been built by Jocelyn Trotman. He (Mr. M. Clerk) had great satisfaction, however, in knowing that Mr. Cockerell agreed with him in holding that the west front must be included among Bishop Jocelyn's works. It was certain that the style was of no later date than any other portion of the building; and all the ancient writers were agreed that the west part was the very part which Jocelyn did build. The Canon of Wells plainly stated that he pulled down the previous structure to the very pavement, and re-erected and then dedicated it. Godwin stated that especially that portion west of the presbytery was completely rebuilt by Jocelyn. The date of the consecration was given in Jocelyn's own words, for he said that he consecrated it on the day of St. Romanus, in the month of November, in the year of our Lord 1239. In another document, bearing date the very year of Jocelyn's death, 1342, and in the thirty-seventh of his episcopate, he spoke as if the church were completely finished: "Which, when we came into possession of" (referring to the bishopric), "our Lord and Saviour promising assistance, having called on him for it, we have fitted it for Divine prayer, sacred unction, and every thing necessary for the right performance of Divine service. And since it is right that those who build churches should also care for those who minister in them, we give" so and so, to the persons who are to serve them. These words were in favour of his (Mr. Clerk's) theory. It was finished after the consecration deed. Professor Willis said, he (Mr. Clerk) had not seen that deed, but he thought that Jocelyn would not have stopped building in the last years of his life, when there was a possibility of his completing the structure before his death. The only person who appeared to have contributed to the building

besides Jocelyn might be ascertained by an inscription which appears on the third abutment of the front of the cathedral, with a date about that of Jocelyn's time. Another date on which he and Professor Willis differed was the date of the central tower. He (Mr. Clerk) put it above 1366: Professor Willis made it 1321. His (Mr. Clerk's) reason for believing that the latter date was correct was, that in every case the spandrels of the arches were marked as in perpendicular work, and that there was a regular band of panels, peculiarities which had not, as far as he was aware, been seen at an earlier date. He believed it was about the time when the perpendicular was merging into the decorative. The documents to which Mr. Willis referred certainly spoke of the consecration in 1290 and 1318, and the gift from Taunton Deanery in 1321; but he (Mr. Clerk) believed that there was another portion of the tower added then, but not that which is now visible: the old work was cut away, and the new framed into it. The corners of the tower have perpendicular mouldings, about the date, no doubt, which Mr. Willis assigned to them; but the whole of the windows had inserted into them tracery of a much later date, according to his opinion.

Amongst the other communications, the Rev. F. Warr read a paper on the British Camp on Worle Hill. An excursion was made to Kewstoke and Banwell Church.

GREENWICH BATHS AND WASHHOUSES.

DESIGNS for this establishment were received in competition, in April last, as our readers may remember. The selected design has since been carried out, and the building is now occupied. It stands in London-street, near the railway station (at the corner of Royal-hill), has a Jacobean front of red bricks, with free-stone dressings and porch. The engine shaft presents a spiral of various-coloured bricks. Although somewhat confined, the accommodation within seems considerable, and includes forty-two baths, first and second class plunging baths, and washing department. The roofs are of iron, light in construction: the centre portion of the roofs is glazed, and is raised up so as to admit a range of upright louvred openings on each side. The baths are of earthenware: the partitions and floors slate. The first class plunging bath is lined with Orsi and Armani's lava, of a blue colour, which gives great brilliancy and greenness to the water. The second class bath is being lined with the same material, of a red colour, and will probably not be so pleasant in effect. Mr. Ritchie was the architect; Mr. Barian the builder.

The sum to which the competitors were confined was 5,000*l*. We said, when we noticed the various plans submitted, that the selected design would obviously cost more than the prescribed amount, and so it has turned out; no less a sum, as we are told, than very nearly 10,000*l*. (including the land), having been expended on it. So much for justice in architectural competitions.

WINDSOR.

A new surveyor has been appointed by the local Board of Health here; also an inspector of nuisances, whose salary, offered to the superintendent of police, and amounting to 20*l*. a year, has been taken from the surveyor's, making the latter 80*l*. a year. The candidates for the surveyorship were.—Mr. Edward Corfield, of Brighton, formerly in the employ of Mr. Bedford, of Windsor; Lieutenant T. Smith, of London, formerly of the St. Helena regiment, and superintendent of works in that island; Mr. George Southwood, of Windsor; Mr. Jesse Hollis, of Windsor, who offered to perform the duties of surveyor and inspector for 50*l*. a year; Mr. Samuel Henry Webber, surveyor and inspector to the Eton local Board of Health; Mr. Thomas Jenkins, surveyor, of Windsor; Mr. Frederick Brown, of Windsor, lately acting as assistant-surveyor. The testimonials of the different candidates having been read at a meeting on Monday last, the committee divided, when there

appeared—for Mr. Jenkins, eight; for Mr. Brown five; Mr. Henry for Mr. Jenkins, three. Mr. Jenkins agreed to accept the office on the terms offered.—At same meeting a letter from the Commissioners of Woods, &c., to Mr. Vaucluse, on the part of the Board of Health, was read, in reply to a request by the Board that the Commissioners of Woods would sanction two or three little improvements in the Home Park, such as that a pump, and an iron seat, lately put up for the occasion of the cattle show, should be allowed to remain for benefit of the public. In reply, the commissioners state that they will consider the subject, but "that they cannot delegate to the Windsor Board of Health any of the duties with which, as Commissioners of her Majesty's Woods, &c., they are invested, for the management of the royal parks, or for the protection of the public interests therein."—A prospectus, we observe, has been issued for the improvement of Windsor, by new streets, a square opposite the new church, new almshouses, villas, slaughter-houses, burial-ground, lodging-houses, washing-houses, and cottages for the poor, &c.; also for the demolition of unsightly buildings, and the erection of a large reservoir behind the Guildhall, for water supply and drainage. No hasty speculation, it is said, is intended, but merely the preparation of plans for future guidance.

SCHOOLS FOR WORKMEN.

It must be a matter of satisfaction to all interested in the progress of artisan education to find the subject so frequently adverted to in your columns. In the present day much is done by continual discussion. When many brains are working on one subject, some good will certainly be evolved. The proposal advocated by Mr. Allen has its own peculiarities; but I trust you will allow me to point out that his school would not be "the first school of art established to improve art workmanship." In May of last year, as your readers know, a committee of gentlemen who felt deeply the importance of this subject, determined to establish suburban artisan schools, and their first school was opened in Camden-town, under the name of the North London School of Drawing and Modelling. This school may be said to be successful, as it has been well attended. It is strictly a school for the art education of the workmen, and not in any degree a school of design. It appears to many that the system adopted here is superior in its nature to that now advocated. The workmen are led to know and understand the true form of objects which they will have to execute; and a capability of drawing the forms of objects, enables them more excellently to execute such forms when they meet with them in the drawings of designers. By the proposed new plan the workmen are treated more as machines, which it is desired to improve than as men of thought and understanding, who simply require knowledge to enable them to perform their mechanical works with more perfection.

I do not understand the advantage of only instructing builders' men. It is true architecture is a leading art, but architects of high standing do not despise the work of designing frames, fenders, and arm-chairs. Indeed, true architecture should include the interior ornaments, and furnishing of a house as well as building the case, and without the carver, moulder, and upholsterer's workmen, the architect's work would be deficient. Indeed it is through these inferior applications that the public mind can chiefly be instructed, and the beauties of true art have thus at last a fair chance of a full development in its higher and nobler branches.

Let artisan art-education be for all comers, and be supported actively, and not only passively, by all who possess opportunity and their number is legion of advancing the happiness and pleasures of mankind.

J. NEVILLE WARREN.

The contract for completing the works on the Kilmarnock Junction Railway has been taken by Mr. Duggan, but the works do not commence until February 1852.